

Subject: Draft 2006 - 2008 STIP
From: Ron Gebhart <RonGebhart@PDCENG.US>
Date: Fri, 30 Dec 2005 15:16:17 -0900
To: DOT_STIP@dot.state.ak.us, jerry_rafson@dot.state.ak.us

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Dear Statewide and Regional Planners,

The Northern Region STIP has good projects programmed, but it falls short of addressing the infrastructure needs of the Region. The lack of new project starts is going to have a dramatic impact on the transportation system of the Region. It will take some time to realize the full impact, but I certainly believe we will regret this program. I'd don't know much about the other Region needs, but in reading the paper, it appears that the entire state will be severely impacted by the short fall. We should re-think the commitments to the "Mega" projects. The list of these giant projects is just too long to start them all within the same funding program, and to following them through with additional funding for many years to come. It is not in the best interest of the State of Alaska.

The Railroad to Canada should be studied by the ARRC. It seems that the EIS currently in progress by ARRC almost gets us there. Two giant bridge projects being funding out of the same program seems unwise. Juneau Access, yet another massive project on the list. In addition, the State has initiated several "Resource Roads" projects. Some of these have been very large and ambitious efforts. These do not get much press, and as yet, I have not been able to come to grips with the value of this program.

I believe we should reach for the ambitious and forward thinking projects, but let's not throw the entire program funding at such things.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment. We have a good system, and I am confident that the final result will be what is best for the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Ronald H. Gebhart, PE